

REMARKS

Upon entry of this Amendment, claims 14-21 will be pending.

Claim 14 stands objected to because of minor informalities. Applicant has amended claim 14 to add the term "layer" as suggested by the Examiner. Thus, Applicant respectfully requests that the objection to claim 14 be withdrawn. Applicant respectfully submits that this amendment does not relate to any issue of patentability and does not narrow the scope of the claims.

In addition, Applicant has amended claims 14 and 17 to conform the claims to language of US patent practice. Applicant respectfully submits that this amendment does not relate to any issue of patentability and does not narrow the scope of the claims. In addition, Applicant respectfully submits that this amendment clearly does not raise new issues requiring further consideration and/or search.

Claims 1-3 and 6-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by *Kondo* (USPN 6,525,704). Claims 4-5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Kondo* in view of *Fujita* (USPN 6,758,538). To facilitate allowance of the application, Applicant respectfully cancels claims 1-8 without prejudice or disclaimer, thereby rendering the rejections moot.

Further, Applicant has canceled withdrawn claims 9-13 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claims 14-21 stand allowed. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims are in clear condition for allowance.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and the timely allowance of the pending claims. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of the response, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicant's undersigned representative to expedite prosecution.

If there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0310. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 not accounted for above, such an extension is requested and the fee should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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